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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

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SVE/MC-13

4:00 P.M.  
DATE: February 6, 1959  
U. S. Embassy Resident

SUBJECT: Berlin and Related Problems

PARTICIPANTS: Secretary-General Paul-Henri Spaak,  
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation  
Secretary of State Dulles

APPROVED - JNG 2/11/59

Ambassador W. Randolph Burgess

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Mr. Spaak opened the conversations by reporting information given him by Ambassador Blankenhorn indicating that Chancellor Adenauer was taking a new approach to the German problem.

The Chancellor, very greatly impressed by the difficulty of the situation in Berlin, believes it may be necessary to make certain concessions in order to meet that situation. These concessions might include the recognition of Poland and Czechoslovakia, the recognition of the Oder-Niesse Line, some possible form of confederation with East Germany, and renunciation by Germany of some forms of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Spaak pointed out that this was of course a report from Blankenhorn and was subject to verification.

Secretary Dulles indicated that a letter he had received from Chancellor Adenauer, written apparently after the conversations reported by Secretary Spaak, contained some of the same ideas but did not refer to a confederation or renunciation of nuclear weapons. In addition it did give indication of a shift of emphasis from the consideration of German questions to disarmament.

Mr. Spaak then set forth his general ideas about the negotiations as to Germany.

He said that the esprit of NATO was good and that the NATO countries generally

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were firm as to retaining the position in Berlin and discussing the Berlin situation only in relation to the German problem generally.

The position of NATO was embarrassed by the fact that no new proposals had been placed before it, but the journalists were constantly launching new ideas ascribed to different statesmen, which were not confirmed.

Also there was some concern about the Macmillan trip to Russia.

Spaak then developed his own idea further, pointing out that the positions of the East and the West were as far apart as the poles; so it seemed difficult to conceive any compromise. This made it incumbent on the West to seek, without yielding in principle, to make a new approach to the problem.

His belief was that we needed to spell out to the public the possible favorable consequences that could derive from a reunification of Germany. These benefits could include some limited form of disengagement, pacts of nonaggression with the Eastern satellite countries, the recognition of Poland and Czechoslovakia, a solution of the Berlin question, and a great enlargement of human liberties.

Secretary Dulles expressed great appreciation of Spaak's thinking on these matters over a period, which had proved very helpful.

Secretary Dulles then reviewed certain recent events including the present status of the drafting of notes in reply to the Soviet letter of January 10, indicating that he hoped it would be possible to submit drafts to NATO early next week.

He commented briefly on the Macmillan trip, and then discussed the problem of the instructions which the Powers in Germany might give their representatives in Berlin with respect to possible interference with access. He pointed out that as a necessary background for negotiation it was essential to have a firm and agreed position to meet the Soviet threats. The general principle of this position was contained in the Resolution of the Four Powers which was endorsed in December by the NATO Council meeting.

In keeping with this Resolution the point where the line should be drawn is the substitution of East German guards for those of the Soviet and their attempt to go beyond identification in their supervision of traffic.

Secretary Dulles emphasized that we all hoped that the occasion would never arise for the exercise of these rules. The hope is that if we are firm, the Soviets will yield, but there is no reason to expect that they would do so in advance.

Secretary Dulles then outlined the general position of the West as he saw it, which was to start from the 1955 program for German reunification and European security. At that time it was not well understood and was undermined by the Soviet. It was necessary to do a public relations job in interpreting this program to

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program to the public, particularly along the lines pointed out by Mr. Spaak. Reunification would open the way for a very substantial easing of the European situation.

With respect to atomic weapons, Secretary Dulles pointed out that he was sure American opinion would require that U. S. troops in Europe would always have as good weapons as the other side, but that the distinction could be drawn perhaps between tactical and strategic weapons.

There ensued an interchange of views as to what might be meant by the word "confederation" and whether it might provide a step toward reunification or, on the contrary, might tend to freeze the present division. Secretary Dulles pointed out that in dealing with the Communists it was essential to have agreements in very specific form as a statement of general principles was too easily violated. The success in Austria may be ascribed in substantial measure to the fact that agreements in the Austrian Treaty were made very specific.

There was also an exchange of views as to certain advantages which were attached to maintenance of the status quo in Germany. Any radical change involved a revamping of the present satisfactory arrangements in European cooperation and in German participation in the alliance as well as in economic affairs. This was said in a mood of nostalgia rather than <sup>as</sup> a program, but in recognition that even the best of efforts may not result in making any significant forward progress.

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